

ACF-901

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Stabilization Grants Provider-Level Data

Office Hours

January 4-6, 2022

Objectives

2

- What is the ACF-901 report?
- What resources are available?
- What is the process for states to test the ACF-901 file format?
- How do I upload the ACF-901 file in CARS?
- Is there any guidance for States using an Excel Spreadsheet?
- Other?

What Are Your Questions?

3

- What are your questions today, so that we can meet your needs?
- Do you want to review how to request a user account?
- Is there a topic that you want to discuss that is not listed under Objectives?

Reminders

4

The data examples presented in subsequent slides represent fake data for illustration purposes only and

the staging site to be used during testing is a .com site.

ACF-901 Report

What is the ACF-901 Report?

6

- ACF-901 is a new data collection form designed to collect American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Stabilization Grants provider-level data
- This data collection is quarterly, gathering the numbers and characteristics of child care providers receiving stabilization grant awards
- Each state/territory will report a quarterly file for each quarter the state/territory has awarded stabilization grants to providers
- If a state/ territory awarded stabilization grant awards prior to January 1, 2022, the first quarterly data are due January 31, 2022
- The date of when the state/territory began awarding stabilization grant awards will determine how many quarterly files are due by January 31, 2022

How Many Reports are Due by January 31, 2022?

7

If the state began awarding stabilization grants to providers:

Prior to July 1, 2021

State will submit three quarterly files for:

1. April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 (Quarter 3 of federal fiscal year FFY 2021)
2. July 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021 (Quarter 4 of FFY 2021)
3. October 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 (Quarter 1 of FFY 2022)

After June 30, 2021 and prior to October 1, 2021

State will submit two quarterly files for:

1. July 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021 (Quarter 4 of FFY 2021)
2. October 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 (Quarter 1 of FFY 2022)

After September 30, 2021 and prior to January 1, 2022

State will submit one quarterly file for:

1. October 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021 (Quarter 1 of FFY 2022)

If a state/territory did not award a stabilization grant prior to January 1, 2022, they do not need to submit a quarterly file by January 31, 2022.

When Are Future Quarterly Reports Due?

8

- After the initial data submission in January 2022, states/territories will submit regular quarterly reports for each quarter they award stabilization funds
- Quarterly data are due 30 days after the end of each quarter
 - After the January 2022 submission, the next quarterly file (Quarter 2 of FFY22) will be due by April 30, 2022
- The state/territory can stop reporting ACF-901 data when they have expended their ARP Act stabilization grant funding
- **A state/territory should include a footnote in their last quarterly ACF-901 submission to inform OCC that this is the last quarterly file**

ACF-901 Resources

ACF-901 Resources

10

Guidance posted on the OCC web site:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/form/acf-901-reporting-states-and-territories>

- ACF-901 Form and Instructions
- Data Standards Slides from Dec 7th Webinar
- Technical Bulletins:
 - ❖ Technical Bulletin #15: ACF-901 provider-level record and file format
 - ❖ Technical Bulletin #16: ACF-901 provider-level data standards

ACF-901 Record Types

11

The data submission is made up of four (4) types of records:

- **Header** record
- **Provider characteristics** records
- **Award characteristics** records
- **Footnotes**

The data are submitted in a flat (.txt) file with variable length records (or fixed length) uploaded into the **CARS**.

Example of an ACF-901 File

12

Below is an example of the entire ACF-901 file. It is made up of four record types:

1. **Header Record** – identifies reporting period and other administrative information
2. **Provider characteristics record** – records on providers receiving awards
3. **Award characteristics record** – information for each award received during quarter
4. **Footnotes** – explain anomalous data or provides additional context

The diagram shows a sample ACF-901 file with four record types identified by arrows:

- Summary Header Record**: Points to the first line of the file.
- Provider/Award Records**: Points to a block of provider and award data records.
- Footnotes**: Points to the final section of the file containing explanatory text.

The file content is as follows:

```
H20211001#20211231#0003521#Jane#Ann#Smith#(555)555-5555#1#jane.smith@anystate.gov$
P00000011587554955555555552123452085210001010200000000000000020011A001000020211117010010A000800020211208010010$
P000000145475849333333333212352208522001001010000000000000000011A001000020211109010010A000800020211208010010$
P0000001158766497777777772123812085210101010050000000000000005011A001000020211215010010A000800020211208010010$
P0000001158315494367854322123632085210010010030000000000000003011A001000020211222010010$
P0000001268755492236578962123452085220001010200000000000000020011A001000020211112010010A000800020211208010010$
...
...
...
...
...
...
...
...
...
...
...
N00State began administering grants in November 2021%%
N13State system does not capture "no response" for any provider that did not respond to the ethnicity question. State
left the response blank for any providers that did not respond yes or no. %%
&
```

13

The **Summary Record** is followed by provider and award records for the quarter. Every provider must have at least one award.

The last character is the "&" file delimiter indicating the end of the quarterly file.

[illegible]

Fixed-Length Record Format

14

States/Territories unable to report in a variable record length format have the option to allocate fixed fields for every submitted record and submit ACF-901 data in the alternative fixed-length format

- The same formatting rules apply;
- State/territory determines a fixed number of awards for their file;
- **Additional delimiter (*)** is used to indicate allocated, but unused space for additional awards;
- An ampersand (&) delimiter is used to indicate the end of the quarterly file.

Fixed-Length Record Format

15

In this example, the lead agency has decided to use four awards as their fixed-length.

Fixed length Provider/Award
Record with one award

P0000001158315494367854322123632085210010010030000000000000003011A001000020211222010010* * *

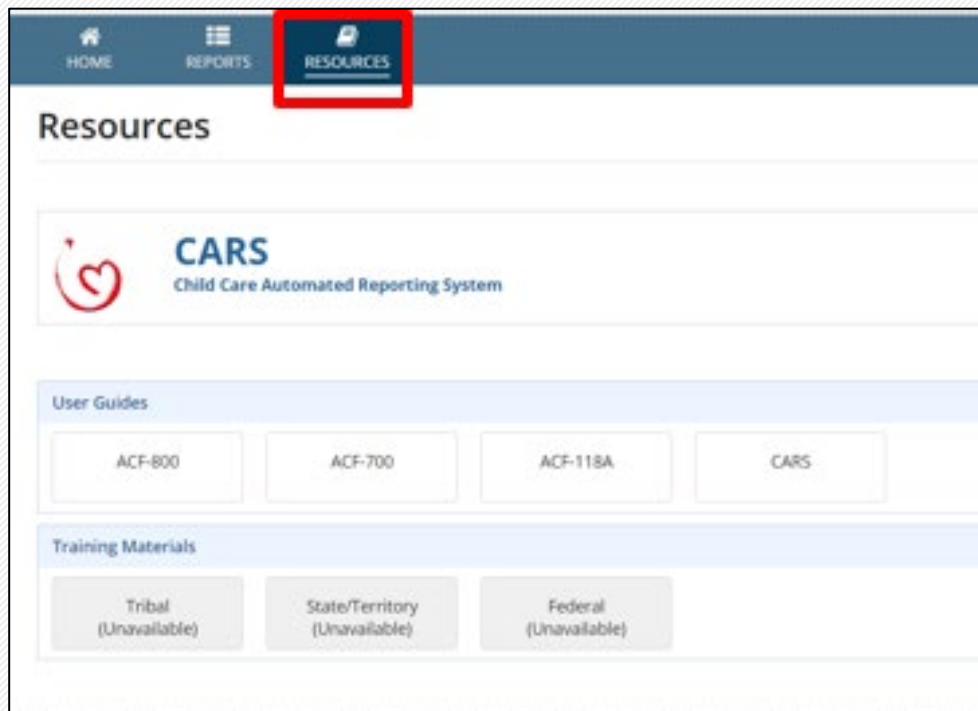
H20211001#20211231#0003521#Jane#Ann#Smith#(555) 555-5555#1#jane.smith@anystate.gov\$
P000000115875549555555552123452085210001010200000000000000020011A001000020211117010010* * \$
P00000014547584933333332123522085220010010100000000000100000011A001000020211109010010A000800020211208010010* * \$
P0000001158766497777777212381208521010101005000000000000005011A001000020211215010010A000250020211105001010A004000020211009010010* * \$
P0000001158315494367854322123632085210010010030000000000000003011A001000020211222010010* * \$

Footnotes

N00State began administering grants in November 2021%%
N13State system does not capture "no response" for any provider that did not respond to the ethnicity question. State left the response blank for any providers that did not respond yes or no. %%
&

Fixed length Provider/Award
Records

Resources in CARS



CARS Technical Support

CARS@gdit.com

877-249-9117





Test the ACF-901 File Format

ACF-901 File Format Testing in CARS

19

Starts: afternoon of [January 5, 2022](#)

Ends: afternoon of [January 14, 2022](#)

The state user testing the ACF-901 file format will need to create a user account in the CARS **STAGING SITE** (a testing environment accessed through a different URL)

Note: this is not the production environment, so any user accessing the testing environment will have to create a new user account

CARS Technical Support

CARS@gdit.com 877-249-9117

ACF-901 File Format Testing in CARS

20

You will receive an email tomorrow afternoon from the CARS TA team letting you know that the testing window is open, along with the URL and reminders on how to complete your test

CARS Technical Support

CARS@gdit.com 877-249-9117

Steps to Test the ACF-901 File Format

21

1. Get your test file ready and reach out to the CARS TA team if you have any questions
2. Create a user account in the CARS staging site (MFA and Account Access)
<https://acfocstaging.appiancloud.com/suite/>
3. Once your account is approved, login into CARS staging site, select the ACF-901 tile, and upload your file
Will demo the upload process in next section
4. The CARS TA team is available to answer any questions, and will reach out to you to ensure your test is complete before requesting de-activation of your staging environment access.

Uploading your ACF-901 File in CARS

How Do I submit an ACF-901 File?

23

- The ACF-901 report will be uploaded via the **Child Care Automated Reporting System (CARS)** – <https://cars.acf.hhs.gov> *[note: the ACF-901 module is not live yet]*
- User Roles that can upload ACF-901 quarterly files into CARS:

User Role	CARS Permissions for ACF-901
Lead Agency Certifier	Can Upload/Replace ACF-901 Data Can View Submission Summary Report (error report) Can View Submission History/Report
<i>Lead Agency User</i>	<i>No Access for ACF-901</i>
<i>Lead Agency View Only</i>	<i>No Access for ACF-901</i>
Tech Submitter (new role for ACF-901)	Can Upload/Replace ACF-901 Data Can View Submission Summary Report (error report) Can View Submission History/Report

File Upload – Step 1

24

On the landing page, select the ACF-901 report module. You may have other report modules on the landing page to select from, depending on your user role



File Upload – Step 2

25

The page displays a description of the report and a drop down menu. Select which Fiscal Year/Quarter you would like to upload

ACF-901 - AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) STABILIZATION GRANTS PROVIDER-LEVEL DATA

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act included approximately \$24 billion funding for child care stabilization grants to stabilize the child care sector and do so in a way that builds back a stronger child care system that supports the developmental and learning needs of children, meets parents' needs and preferences with equal access to high-quality child care, and supports a professionalized workforce that is fairly and appropriately compensated for the essential skilled work that they do. Lead Agencies must spend stabilization funds as subgrants to qualified child care providers to support the stability of the child care sector during and after the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The Office of Child Care (OCC) established a new data collection form, the ACF-901 – American Rescue Plan (ARP) Stabilization Grants Provider-Level Data. All Lead Agencies in the States, the District of Columbia, and Territories (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) are responsible for collecting and reporting provider-level stabilization grants data (ACF-901). Lead Agencies report the ACF-901 data quarterly, due 30 days after the end each quarter (i.e., October to December data will be due January 30). States submit their provider-level records electronically to the Child Care Automated Reporting System (currently under development).

OCC plans to provide additional technical format guidance to states and territories in the form of a Technical Bulletin, which will describe the format of each data element (such as, guidance on the format of a date field, or the length of a numeric field).

For more information and guidance on Federal reporting requirements, see the Office of Child Care's web site at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/reporting>.

Fiscal Year/Quarter

FY 2022 Q1
FY 2022 Q1
FY 2021 Q4
FY 2021 Q3

Quarter

October 1 - December 31

State/Territory

Alabama

START

File Upload – Step 3

26

Select the “Upload” button.

Using File Explorer, navigate to and select the appropriate .TXT file you would like to upload to CARS. (You must have access to the ACF-901 file location in your internal server)

ACF-901 - AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) STABILIZATION GRANTS PROVIDER-LEVEL DATA

Alabama for FY 2021 Q3

Upload ACF-901 File

UPLOAD



Drop file here

CANCEL


File Upload – Step 4

27

Verify that the intended file was selected, and then click the “Validate File” button.

Alabama for FY 2021 Q3

Upload ACF-901 File

 **CARS ACF-901 Full Warnings**
TXT – 1.08 KB

File Upload – Step 5

28

View and evaluate notifications, which may include items such as:

- File Format Validation **Errors**
- State Header **Warnings**
- **Successful** File Format Validation

Upload ACF-901 File



CARS ACF-901 Bad Award

TXT – < 1 KB

File Format Validation Error

- **Awards are not properly delimited and/or missing Required fields**

State Header Warnings

- Period Start Date 20211001 does not match the selected Fiscal Year/Quarter: 20210401
- Period End Date 20211231 does not match the selected Fiscal Year/Quarter: 20210630
- Provider Count 0000001 does not match the number of Providers in the File: 3

Child Care Automated Reporting System



CARS

Child Care Automated Reporting System

ACF-901 - AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) STABILIZATION GRANTS PROVIDER-LEVEL DATA

The File Format Validated Successfully.

File Upload – Step 6

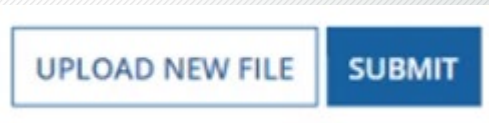
29

After evaluating the notifications from the system, you may:

1- Choose to upload a New File

OR

2- Submit the file to OCC



Your lead agency can submit files that contain **warnings**.

Your lead agency cannot submit files that contain **format errors**.

Errors indicate that the file format issues are severe enough that the system is not able to parse the data.

File Upload – (OPTIONAL) Step 7

30

Lead agencies will be able to re-submit a quarterly file.



UPLOAD NEW FILE

You may want to do this for the purpose of improving data quality.



Guidance for States Using an Excel Spreadsheet

Guidance re: Excel Spreadsheet

33

- There are many ways that a lead agency may be using Excel to capture ARP Act stabilization grants data
- OCC does not know how states are structuring their Excel files and data
- OCC can provide an Excel template and an Excel macro that can be used together to generate a flat .txt file – VOLUNTARY USE
 - In order to execute the Macro, the lead agency user will need to “Enable Content”, which may be blocked by the security policies of your organization. OCC does not require any lead agency to use the template and macro provided, and lead agency users should comply with their organization’s security policies.
- Lead agencies should note that these materials provide just ONE way of how data can be formatted and extracted

Converting Excel Template to Text File

34

If a state/territory wants to use the Excel template and macro, they can:

- let the CARS TA team know that you want these resources – the CARS TA team will email you the materials
- populate the OCC provided Excel template, ensuring to strictly follow the directions
- use the OCC provided ACF-901 Macro tool to convert the Excel file into a text (.txt) file
- upload the ACF-901 text file into CARS

Excel Template to Text File Reminders

35

Important Reminders:

- **Upon request, the CARS TA team will provide two Excel files** – one template (*ExceltoTextTemplateACF-901.xlsx*) and one Macro tool (*ExceltoTextProcessing.xlsm*)
- ***Do not modify the structure*** of the template or Macro tool
- *Data entered into the template must **follow the Data Standards** as outlined in Technical Bulletin #16, for example*
 - *Dates must be 8 digits and formatted as YYYYMMDD*
 - *Yes, No responses must be “1” or “0” as specified*
- **Do not include delimiters** in the data to be copied/pasted into the template (the Macro tool will add the delimiters)
- Prior to running the Macro, **close all other Excel files!**

ACF-901 Excel Template

36

- The Excel template has 4 worksheets (one for each record type)
- The worksheet columns are populated with the data element names for that record type

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Start of Reporting Period	End of Reporting Period	Total Number of Providers Included	State Point of Contact First Name	State Point of Contact Middle Name	State Point of Contact Last Name	State Point of Contact Phone Number	State Point of Contact Phone Type	State Point of Contact Email Address	
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										
16										
17										
18										
19										
20										
21										
22										
23										
24										
25										
26										
27										
28										

DO NOT MODIFY THE WORKSHEETS OR COLUMN HEADINGS!!

Ready | **HEADER** | PROVIDERS | AWARDS | FOOTNOTES | + | Display Settings | 100%

ACF-901 Macro Tool

37

This workbook contains macros to convert multiple ACF-901 tables from sheets labeled "HEADER" "PROVIDERS" "AWARDS" "FOOTNOTES" from the standard ACF-901 excel format files into a "Final" excel file that contains a single data process friendly text file. Multi-select is supported

Main Macro: Convert & Format Source Files

This Excel Macro Workbook has the Auto-Open feature enabled and the macro should run automatically when the file is opened. If the macro does not run when opened, check to ensure that the Excel security settings are set to enable macros to run.

If you arrive at this page it is because the macro did not auto run. To initiate the macro from this page use the keyboard command **control + f**

See the example of properly formatted source file by clicking on the 'source file format' worksheet in this

**DO NOT
MODIFY!!**

REVISION HISTORY:

12/18/2021	Eugene Pun	1.01	Adjusted final formatting
12/20/2021	Eugene Pun	1.02	Fixed how award data were read for the text file Added "H" in front of header line. Added "A" in front of each award lines. Added "&" at the end of text file.
12/20/2021	Eugene Pun	1.03	Added logic to replace "+" in certain cells with spaces appropriate to column
12/20/2021	Eugene Pun	1.04	Adjusted logic to replace "+" in certain cells with spaces appropriate to column. Looks for multiple "+" in certain columns. Fixed the mapping of multiple "+" in certain columns
12/20/2021	Eugene Pun	1.05	Added "P" in front of Footnotes. Adjusted instruction cell in instructions page of the Macro. Updated Message Box Text

Step 1 - Populate the Excel Template

38

Prepare your source file information (Data must match the order of the data elements in the template and the data standards as noted in TB # 16.

Open the Template and populate (copy/paste) data for providers and awards for the quarter

- Do not change the column order, worksheet order or worksheet names in the templates (change information in your source file to match the order of the information in the template.
- Data must match the data standards (# of characters, acceptable values, and suggested guidance) – For example, #19 – total licensed capacity is 4 characters. If capacity is 45, then '0045' must be entered in the cell for that provider.
- All missing data must be substituted with “+” in the Excel template. The number of Plus signs must match the number of characters allowed for the element/field. For example, if Provider Unique ID is missing, then 15 Plus signs (+) should be entered in that cell for the provider.

Step 1 - Populate the Excel Template: Important Note

39

Provider Unique State ID (#7) and Provider FEIN (#8) must be consistent for a provider in both the provider tab and the award tab in order for the provider data to be matched to the award data.

For example, if FEIN is missing for a provider in the provider tab, it must be missing in the award tab.

Step 1 - Populate the Excel Template

40

Additional Tips:

Header Tab:

- All elements are required, however, if missing information for an element, leave blank.

Provider Tab:

- Several provider elements must be populated in the file as right-justified with leading zeros to fill the # of characters, including - #7 – Provider Unique State ID and #19 - #23 – Licensed or identified capacity elements.

Awards Tab:

- Element #26 – Award Amount must be rounded to the nearest dollar and right-justified with leading zeros.

Step 2 - Save the Template

41

After the template has been populated, rename the file using the following nomenclature:

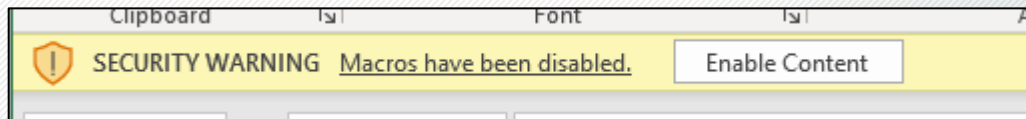
ACF-901_State_FiscalYearAndQuarter.xlsx

For example: ACF-901_Texas_FFY2021Q3.xlsx

Step 3 - Run the Macro Tool

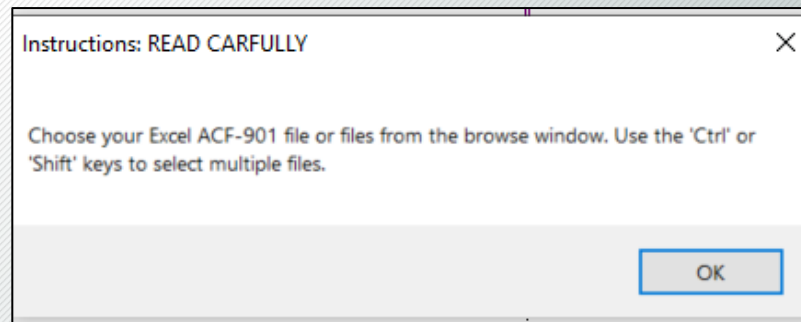
42

- a) Close all other Excel files
- b) Open the Macro tool: ***ExceltoTextProcessing.xlsm***
- c) Click **Enable Content** button on the Yellow Security Warning



The “Enable Content” functionality may be blocked by the security policies of your organization. OCC does not require any lead agency to use the template and macro provided, and lead agency users should comply with their organization’s security policies.

- d) Read Message and click the **OK** button (Additional instructions found on the *Instructions* tab)



Step 3 - Run the Macro Tool

43

- e) After browse window opens, select the saved file (template with populated data) you want to convert to a .txt file
- f) Use the 'ctrl' or Shift keys to select multiple files
- g) Click the **OK** button to create the .txt file



Click the **OK** button and the .txt file will have the same name as and will be saved in the same location as the file you selected to convert

Step 3 - Run the Macro Tool

44

- h) If message indicates file conversion was not successful, ensure that you have not modified any of the information in the original template
- i) If you need to re-run the Macro tool, press the 'ctrl' + f keys
- j) Submit your file via CARS! (see slide #19)

Request Staging User Account

Two-Step Process

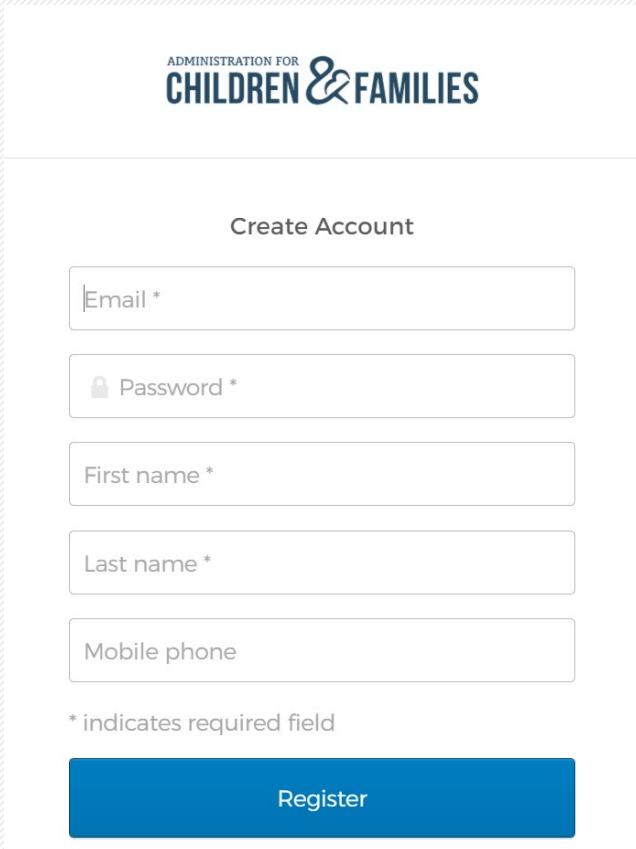
46

1. Register to establish multi-factor authentication method (using Okta)
2. Request CARS user account

How to Register with Okta

(Multi-Factor Authentication Tool)

47



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Create Account

Email *

Password *

First name *

Last name *

Mobile phone

* indicates required field

Register

1. Visit the CARS staging site:
<https://acfocstaging.appiancloud.com/suite/>
2. Scroll down and click:
Don't have an account? [Sign up](#)
3. Fill-in information (***Remember Password***)
4. Click "Register"
5. Check email and click account activation [link](#) from Okta
6. Setup Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

How to Setup Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

48

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Set up multifactor authentication

Your company requires multifactor authentication to add an additional layer of security when signing in to your Okta account.

- Okta Verify**
Use a push notification sent to the mobile app.
[Setup](#)
- Google Authenticator**
Enter single-use code from the mobile app.
[Setup](#)
- SMS Authentication**
Enter a single-use code sent to your mobile phone.
[Setup](#)
- Voice Call Authentication**
Use a phone to authenticate by following voice instructions.
[Setup](#)
- Email Authentication**
Enter a verification code sent to your email.
[Setup](#)

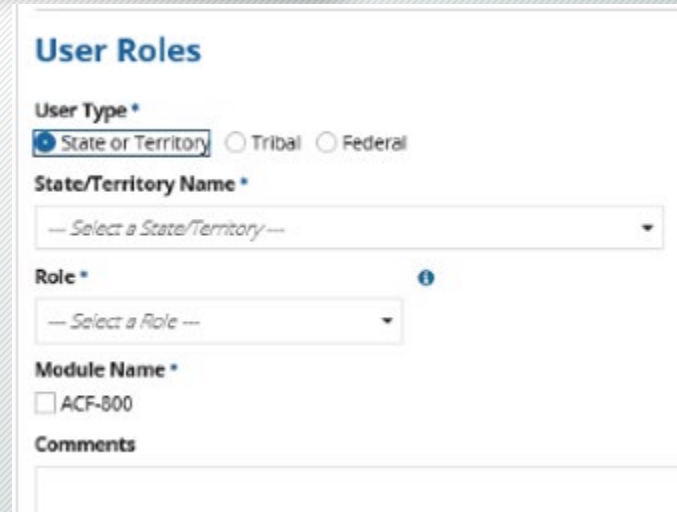
[Finish](#)

1. Click link from email
2. Setup at least one MFA method (*use each time you log in*)
3. Click the ***Finish*** button.
4. Setup Forgotten Password Retrieval (*at least 2 of the 3 methods*)
5. Click the ***Create My Account*** button

Request CARS Role and Module(s)

49

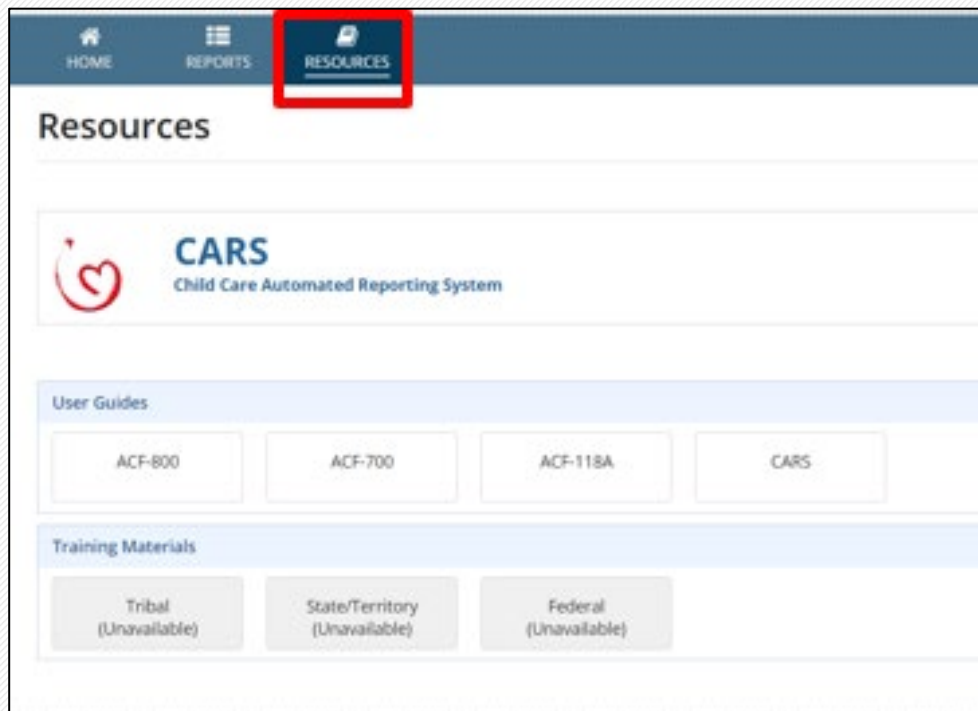
1. Select **User Type** → State/Territory
2. Select **Grantee Name** → from drop-down list
3. Request **User Role** → Certifier or Tech Submitter
4. Request **Modules** you need access to → ACF-901
5. Add any appropriate comments and click **submit**
 - i. Automated emails generated to approver and requester
6. Once approved, login at: <https://acfocstaging.appiancloud.com/suite/>
7. Verify identity using the MFA method you selected



The screenshot shows the 'User Roles' form in the Appian system. It includes the following fields and options:

- User Type ***: Radio buttons for 'State or Territory' (selected), 'Tribal', and 'Federal'.
- State/Territory Name ***: A dropdown menu with the placeholder text '— Select a State/Territory —'.
- Role ***: A dropdown menu with the placeholder text '— Select a Role —'.
- Module Name ***: A checkbox for 'ACF-800'.
- Comments**: A text area for additional remarks.

Resources



CARS Technical Support

CARS@gdit.com

877-249-9117

